

CHARITABLE GAMING HIGHLIGHT\$

2004 Volume 17, No. 1



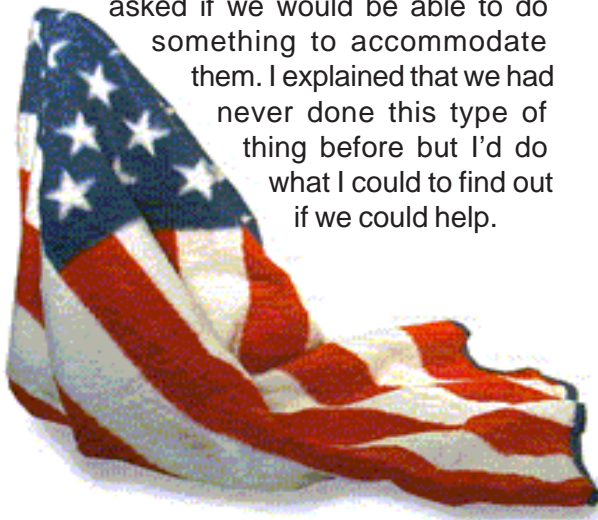
Indian River VFW: A Ride to Remember

Written by Gordon Graham, Indian River VFW Post 7439

It was mid-afternoon when the phone rang this past spring. On the other end of the line was a familiar voice — one I had become acquainted with just a few months earlier. It was a lady from the Hospice of the Straits in Cheboygan. Last summer she called to ask if our color guard would be willing to conduct a flag-raising ceremony in conjunction with one of their programs. We gladly complied and were privileged to do so.

This time, however, the request was for something entirely different.

She explained that one of their patients—a veteran—had requested he be transferred to the Veterans Hospital in Saginaw, where he wanted to spend his final days among fellow veterans. Her problem was that she had no way to get him there. She then asked if we would be able to do something to accommodate them. I explained that we had never done this type of thing before but I'd do what I could to find out if we could help.



I really had no idea how we might be able to help her in this instance, but I told her I would get right on it and call her back as soon as possible. And, as an afterthought, I asked, "How soon does he have to be in Saginaw"?

"Tomorrow," came the answer!

I was completely in shock with this reply and felt obligated to tell her once again that I was not sure I could be of any help on such short notice. To soften the request, she told me they could make a van available if we could find someone to drive it. I repeated my condition "that I'd do my best" and hung up.

Had I had my wits about me, I would have asked about the physical condition of the patient or whether he was ambulatory, but it was too late, the opportunity was gone. I didn't even know the man's name! The time constraint threw me for a loss, and I was anxious to talk to some of my comrades to get some sense of direction. All I knew at that point was, there was a veteran in need of some immediate help!

A phone call a few minutes later to one of our members gave me the first spark of encouragement. He reminded me that "it was our mission to help fellow veterans when and where we can." This code of fellowship becomes ingrained when you enter the military, and it never leaves; dependence on one another is part of the training.

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This one call started a chain reaction, and it was only a matter of minutes, it seemed, before a call was returned to the lady from the hospice, telling her there were two of our Vietnam veterans who would take on the job of transporting their patient down to the Saginaw Veterans Center.

The next morning, at the appointed hour, the patient was picked up and the trip to Saginaw began.

As it turned out the patient was a World War II veteran and, to the best of our knowledge, had no affiliation with any veterans' group. The man's name was "Pete."

The younger Vietnam veterans and their passenger were wars apart, but the difference in their ages seemed to melt away as they exchanged stories about their times in the service. This, coupled with the fact that the patient required some attention in his wheelchair along the way, helped make the miles easier. One drove the van, while the other took care of Pete's comforts. They gave him a lap robe one of their friends had made just days before to make sure he was warm enough in the back of the van.

Turning Pete over to the veterans' facility completed their mission, and the two men from the local VFW post and their passenger, a total stranger only hours before, said their good-byes.

The return home from any trip always seems to take longer for some reason, but the two men felt good about what they had done, and the ride back to Indian River seemed shorter in this instance.

It was only a matter of a few days when the lady from the hospice called, once again. This time, to tell us Pete had passed away. Then Pete's brother called to thank the two men from the VFW and to tell them Pete wanted to be buried with the Stars and Stripes printed lap robe they gave him on the way to Saginaw. That made their trip even more meaningful.

The names of the Vietnam vets in this article are not important to the story and have been omitted at their request. The important thing to remember is that the Veterans of Foreign Wars continues to serve our community with pride and willingness, when and where we can. That's what we do!

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Serving the Poor Through Bingo

Submitted by Chris Root, Diocese of Lansing

Sixty years ago Sister M. Claudia Burke entered the convent of the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor. She never thought she would be working at bingo halls – calling out the numbers, selling cards, and counting money. The bingo games are the primary source of income for Catholic Outreach, the emergency relief agency Burke founded.

Sister Claudia has spent more than 40 years in Flint raising money for the needy in a number of ways. She has grown food in a garden, started the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, sold doughnuts in a doughnut shop, and sweet-talked people into giving money. She has been coordinator of the Holy Angels Convent, a social worker at Catholic Social Services, and a picket in support of Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers.

She arrived in Flint in 1960 to work for Catholic Social Services and spent much of her time working in adoptions. In 1967, she was transferred to a parish in a Cincinnati ghetto to help residents organize to use community resources and create others where needed. She spent a year there. In Flint, she was coordinator of the Holy Angels Convent, which focused on assisting the poor. The sisters handed out sandwiches to anyone who knocked on the door.

Assisting the poor was not the focus of Catholic Social Services, where Burke was senior caseworker, so in 1977 she single-handedly opened Catholic Outreach out of Holy Angels Convent. She thought the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor would support it, but the order didn't do so. The Catholic Diocese of Lansing also hesitated to take it on. "But if the church isn't going to take risks for the poor, who is?" she asked. She receives money from the Diocese, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and from the Michigan Family Independence Agency. But most of Catholic Outreach support comes from bingo.

"Sometimes I wonder how we keep going," she said. "We live with that mystery. It's a story of loaves and fishes. Sometimes I complain to the Lord and He says, 'O ye of little faith.' So I go plodding along." The agency now helps at least 12,000 families a year with a staff of about 20.



Raffle Proceeds Help Build Cancer Center

For 17 years, the MCG Foundation, the fundraising arm of Mount Clemens General Hospital in Mount Clemens has held an annual elimination raffle. Over the last three years, almost \$280,000 in raffle proceeds have been used toward the building of a new Cancer Center at Mount Clemens General Hospital. A portion of the proceeds also benefit the hospital's Mat Gaberty Heart Center, the premier center for cardiac care and surgery in Macomb County. In previous years, the foundation's elimination raffles have also funded the Medical Outreach Clinic, Medical Education Auditorium, and Emergency Center.

The Cancer Center is scheduled to open in 2006. It will allow Macomb area residents to get the cancer diagnosis and advanced treatment they need without having to leave the county.



Fresh Ideas for Stale Bingos

Making Your Bingo Attractive

What qualities do players look for in a bingo hall? Like anyone else, players want an atmosphere that is pleasant and comfortable and where they feel welcome.

A relaxed and comfortable player will be more likely to return to your game week after week. And let's face it—word of mouth is the most effective and cheapest form of local advertising. Here are some steps you should take to attract and keep your customers:

1. When your organization signs a contract with a hall, make sure they will be maintaining the appearance of the hall. It's amazing what a fresh coat of paint and a carpet cleaning can do to enhance the environment.
2. All equipment should be in perfect working order, i.e., bingo machines, smoke eaters, etc.
3. Good food counts for a lot! Put on a nice, low cost meal to reel in the players an hour before bingo starts.
4. Bathrooms should *always* be stocked and clean. This is very important but frequently overlooked.
5. Clean tables and chairs are a must.
6. Piles of non-winning tickets and paper is a reminder to the player of their losses. Workers should keep tables clean. The tables can even be designed with built-in trash receptacles.
7. Post your organization's latest accomplishments that were funded through bingo. There is



satisfaction in knowing that the money spent on playing bingo or buying charity game tickets was used to benefit the local community.

8. Train your workers to provide four-diamond service. A smiling worker at the door to greet your guests makes them feel welcome. Ensure your workers can answer the frequently asked questions or know where to find answers.



Ideas to Create Excitement

1. Integrate themes into your bingo events once or twice a month. Consider the season, holidays, and popular occasions to help you determine the themes. Bring your theme into the atmosphere through games, props, and music.
2. Have contests. The average large bingo occasion pays out \$1,600 in prizes; therefore, \$50 for the best costume or most creative good luck charm would be feasible for most bingos and can add excitement to the event. Total prizes cannot exceed \$2,000.
3. Talk to your hall landlord about purchasing a wireless microphone system. Not only do the microphones look high tech, they allow workers to speak clearly without getting tangled in a wire.
4. To make verifying a bit quicker, number your tables. If the caller notices a bingo, he can say, "Bingo on table 3," rather than trying to point out a winner.
5. Provide a non-smoking section for players. Better yet, have a smoking section that is sectioned off so that non-smokers don't have to walk through the smoking area.
6. Collect player mailing information for those interested in receiving a notice of special events. Include a couple general questions about what they did or didn't like about your bingo. Use your new mailing list to keep your customers informed.
7. Treat your bingo like a business. Plan ahead and develop a long-term plan for your bingo sessions. Maintain an agenda to stay on top of your responsibilities.
8. Design a flyer or calendar of upcoming events, noting the themed bingos and regular sessions. Make sure the calendar has the name of the organization, bingo location, and play times. Also, because this is a form of advertising, rules require you include the license number and what the proceeds will be used for.
9. At the end of each session, position workers by the door to thank customers for coming and distribute your calendar of events.



Above all, be creative!

Texas Hold'em—A Fun Way to Make Money



You've seen it on television, now you can play it at your next millionaire party. Thanks to television shows like the World Poker Tour on the Travel Channel and Celebrity Poker on Bravo, Texas Hold'em tournaments have become increasingly popular.

Texas Hold'em is a version of poker in which each player receives two cards face down and five community cards are dealt face up in the middle of the table. Several betting rounds occur as the community cards are dealt. The object is to create the best five card poker hand using any combination of your own two cards and/or the five community cards.

The Charitable Gaming Division has issued a directive authorizing the conduct of Texas Hold'em tournaments. The directive was written in a way that mirrors the tournaments you have seen on television. Players pay an entry fee for a predetermined amount of chips. The chips have no cash redemption value and are for betting purposes only. The tournament is played until all but one player has lost all their chips or until a predetermined ending time. The last remaining player, or the player having the highest value of chips when the tournament ends, is declared the winner.

No player may be awarded cash and/or merchandise prizes exceeding \$500 per day. If the tournament is conducted over several days, a top prize totaling \$500 for each day of the tournament may be awarded. For example, if the Texas Hold'em tournament is conducted over three days, a top prize of \$1,500 can be awarded. Additionally, the organization sponsoring the tournament cannot receive more than \$15,000 per day in exchange for chips.

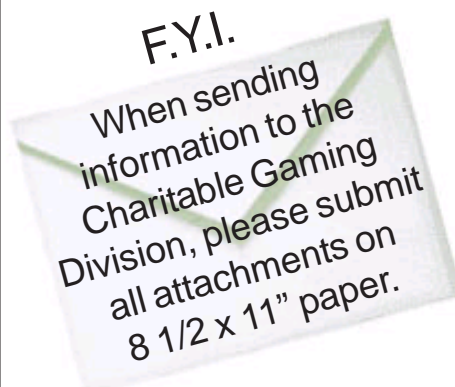
If you are interested in conducting a Texas Hold'em tournament, you can obtain a copy of the Texas Hold'em directive on our web site at www.michigan.gov/cg.

Your Two Cents' Worth



Hundreds of charities throughout Michigan depend on bingo as a method of fundraising in their community. Due to increases in casino and tribal gaming, the revenue raised by charities from bingo has declined dramatically.

Whether you are a bingo player or not, please take a few minutes to complete a short online survey regarding charitable gaming. Visit our web site at www.michigan.gov/cg and click on the blinking icon. Your feedback will provide valuable information as we attempt to revitalize charitable gaming.



Mis-management of an Event

Michigan has always required the licensee to manage their own events. This is required by Section 10(1) of the Bingo Act which states: "Only a member of the qualified organization shall participate in the management of an event."

Earlier this year, a licensee entered into a contract to allow an out-of-state company to conduct their raffle, including selling tickets and advertising the event. This was such a gross violation of the Bingo Act and rules that the bureau came close to summarily suspending the raffle license. When faced with the possible suspension, the organization cancelled the event and refunded all money.

Several years ago a licensee allowed one of their members to promote and participate in the conduct of the raffle through his advertising agency. When all was said and done the licensee made little if any profit. The profit that was normally associated with this event was actually absorbed by the advertising agency. In this instance the licensee allowed the ad agency to participate in the management of the raffle.

The purpose of Section 10(1) of the Bingo Act was to assure that the licensee was actively involved in the conduct of their own licensed gaming events and to assure that for-profit companies did not solicit charities with promises of huge returns only to charge management fees that absorb all profits from the licensed events.

The result of Section 10(1) of the Bingo Act and other rules limiting participation in the management of licensed gaming events, places Michigan in the top six percent of all states in the amount of profit returned to our licensees.



What Are Directives?

The Charitable Gaming Division issues directives for the conduct of approved games, authorized equipment, and to provide clarification on various aspects of our gaming program. The following is a listing of the current directives issued in accordance with the Charitable Gaming Rules:

General

1.01.01 Computerized Record Keeping

Bingo

3.01.01 Michigan Progressive Jackpot Bingo Game
3.02.01 Electronic Bingo Cards (General)
3.03.01 Bingo Verification Slips and Voiding Instructions
3.04.01 Cash Registers
3.05.01 Electronic Bingo Cards (Equipment)

Millionaire Party

4.01.01 Millionaire Party (Let It Ride)
4.02.01 Millionaire Party (Seven Card Stud Poker)
4.03.01 Millionaire Party (Tournament Texas Hold'em)

Raffle

5.01.01 Raffles (Duck Race)
5.02.01 Raffles (Animal Determination)
5.03.01 Raffles (Daily 3/Daily 4)

Charity Game Ticket

6.01.01 Charity Game Ticket (Supplier)
6.02.01 Charity Game Tickets (Secondary Game of Chance)

Supplier

8.01.01 Electronic Bingo Cards (Supplier)

Halls

10.01.01 Hall (Electronic Bingo Cards)
10.02.01 Hall (Secure Locked Storage, Money Counting Room, and Rental Fee Restrictions)

To obtain a copy of a directive, visit our web site at www.michigan.gov/cg or call us at (517) 335-5780 to request a copy be mailed to you.

Administrative Action

Suspended Licenses					
Organization Name	City	Violation(s)	Length	Date	License
ST. JEROME CHURCH	Battle Creek	Failure to maintain accurate/current records; failure to follow MI Progressive Jackpot directive; exceeding prize limit; failure to maintain accurate/current disposable card inventory records; failure to have invoices or receipts for expenditures.	2 weeks	11/2/03	Bingo
EAGLES 3485	Mt. Morris	Failure to account for all funds; failure to maintain accurate/current records.	6 weeks	11/9/03	Annual CGT
LAKELAND BAND BOOSTERS	White Lake	Failure to maintain all game records/maintain accurate record of disposable bingo cards.	1 week	11/23/03	Bingo
AMERICAN LEGION 310	Flint	Failure to follow the bureau's directive for voiding verification slips; worker pay records incomplete; failure to account for the sale of disposable bingo cards; failure to account for the sale of charity game tickets.	2 weeks	12/28/03	Bingo
AMERICAN LEGION FLINT COUNCIL	Flint	Failure to follow the bureau's directive for voiding verification slips; failure to account for the sale of disposable bingo cards; failure to account for the sale of charity game tickets.	2 weeks	12/28/03	Bingo
EAGLES 2254	Monroe	Failure to account for all funds.	4 weeks	3/14/04	Annual CGT
AMERICAN LEGION 55	Albion	Failure to account for the sale of charity game tickets; failure to account for the sale of disposable bingo cards; failure to maintain accurate/current records; failure to maintain accurate inventory records of disposable bingo records.	4 weeks	3/21/04	Bingo
EAGLES 3552	Charlotte	Failure to account for the sale of disposable bingo cards; failure to maintain accurate/current inventory record of disposable bingo cards; failure to account for the sale of charity game tickets.	1 week	4/4/04	Bingo
DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF RIVERVIEW	Riverview	Failure to account for all verification slips; worker pay records inaccurate and/or incomplete; failure to account for all funds.	3 weeks	4/18/04	Bingo
POLISH ROMAN CATHOLIC UNION OF AMERICA 78	Muskegon	Failure to maintain all game records; failure to maintain accurate/current records; failure to account for all funds.	2 weeks	4/25/04	Annual CGT

Voluntary Surrender of License			
Organization Name	City	Date	License
ELKS 505	Alpena	11/9/03	Annual CGT
GREATER MUSKEGON HELPERS FOR CHARITY	Muskegon	11/28/03	Bingo
SOUTHWEST LITTLE LEAGUE	Grand Rapids	1/4/04	Bingo
CARMAN PLAZA COMMUNITY BINGO, L.L.C.	Flint	2/29/04	Hall

Legal Action

Eagles 4321, Greenville

Barbara Joan Sanders, chairperson, was found guilty of Embezzlement Over \$1,000. The 8th Judicial Circuit Court in Montcalm County sentenced her to six months in jail, \$12,958 in restitution, \$320 in additional fees, and 36 months probation.



Area Training Meetings

Charitable Gaming inspectors conduct statewide training sessions for licensees covering topics such as record keeping, rules, and accountability. We encourage you to attend any meetings in your area to stay current on the latest charitable gaming news and requirements.

The following training meetings will be covering raffles, millionaire parties, bingo, and charity game tickets. All meetings are scheduled for 6:30 p.m.

June 1
American Legion Flint Council
G4314 W. Carpenter Road
Flint, Michigan

August 10
VFW 3673
West US 2
Bessemer, Michigan
(Central Standard Time)

October 26
Boys and Girls Club
300 W. Lafayette
Bay City, Michigan

July 13
Air Force Sergeants Assn 774
1995 Ensign Street
Battle Creek, Michigan

September 14
American Legion 200
11800 Michael Avenue
Taylor, Michigan

November 4
Gingerville Community Center
1801 Waldon
Lake Orion, Michigan

Check our web site for a current listing of all training meetings.